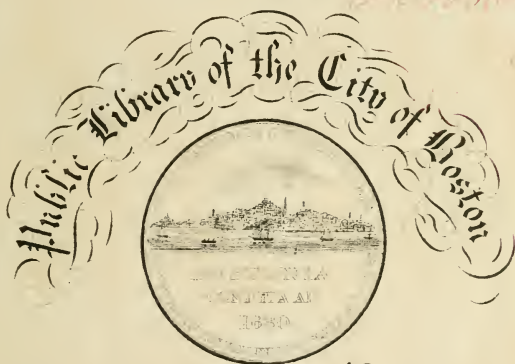


B. H.

PRESENTED TO THE



By Estate of H. W. Dutton
Received July 17 1845 . 182474

IMPROVISATIONS AND TRANSLATIONS.

IMPROVISATIONS
AND
TRANSLATIONS

BY
NATHANIEL GREENE.

‘L’esprit n’est jamais las d’écrire
Lorsque le cœur est de moitié.’
Gresset.

BOSTON:
TICKNOR, REED, AND FIELDS.
MDCCCLII.

182,474

July 17, '75.

Estate of W. W. Gutton.

NOTE — Most of the pieces in this collection first appeared in the Boston Post, for which paper they were written. Those which are translations, are here nearly all accompanied by their originals; but without the names of their authors, for the reason that, with one or two exceptions, they were unknown to the translator. “*Le Rêve de la Châtelaine*,” is copied from a manuscript kindly furnished to the translator by a lady for whom it was written, and has never before been published.

CONTENTS.

EPISTLE DEDICATORY	9
ON LEAVING AMERICA	13
LA BELLE FRANCE	15
VERS DE LAMARTINE	17
TRANSLATION FROM LAMARTINE	21
TO ARAMINTA	26
LES ETOILES	28
THE STARS	31
CHANSON	34
SONG	36
THE BLOSSOM BY THE FOUNTAIN	38
A CASE IN EQUITY	41
THE FLOWER AND THE BUTTERFLY	43
AN EPISTLE	45
WHAT THE NIGHTINGALE SINGS	47
THE ROSE AND THE GRAVE	49
JE NE VOUS AIME PLUS	51

I WILL LOVE NO MORE	53
PLEASURE	55
LE BOUQUET DU PAGE	56
THE BOUQUET OF THE PRETTY PAGE	59
MY PREFERENCE	62
REJECT NOT LOVE	64
SONNET	66
TO THE AUTHORESS OF THE 'QUEENS OF SPAIN'	67
AN EPISTLE	69
SOUVENIRS	71
A FANTASY	73
SEPARATION AND REPARATION	74
A REFLECTION	76
A GIFT	77
THE REASON WHY	79
THE TWO AGES	81
THE SWALLOWS	82
AN EXHORTATION	84
MIDNIGHT	86
THE EXILE AND THE SWALLOW	88
INQUIRY AND CONCLUSION	90
TIME AND MEMORY	92
A BACCHANAL	94

CONTENTS.

vii

SPEAK NOT TO ME	96
ADVICE TO A. H.	98
CHERISHED MEMORIES	99
TO LIZZIE	101
AN UNSENT REPLY	103
LE REVE DE LA CHATELAINE	105
THE CHATELAINE'S DREAM	110
THE SPEAKING FLOWER	115
TO A LADY	117
TO MARY	119
SONNET. TO H. W. LONGFELLOW	121
AN INVOCATION	123
SONNET	125
SPARE THE FLOWERS	127
A CALABRIAN SONG	129

EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

TO

JAMES T. FIELDS,

PUBLISHER, BOSTON.

Your philosophy, dear Fields,
Too much instruction yields
In the matter of employ,
For you to deem it crime
That I should give to rhyme
The hours I would enjoy.

Idleness may inspire
The echoes of the lyre,

As well as feeling, deep ;
And 'tis to me a pleasure
To occupy my leisure
In rhyming, while you sleep.

No smoothly polished verse
Can I to you rehearse :

It is not in my line.
For all an author's gains
I could not take the pains
To make my verses fine.

But, to you and other friends,
I'm sure 'twill make amends,

My daily thoughts to view,
Since I, with heart of lead
And sad bewildered head,
Last bade you all adieu.

Therefore to you and them,
This volume, though a gem
Of which I cannot boast,
Is dedicate and sent;—
Which, if you wish to print,
Please copy from the Post.

PARIS, *Oct. 1*, 1851.

ON LEAVING AMERICA.

JULY, 1850.

ADIEU, adieu, my place of birth,
Adieu, my native air;
A long farewell to all on earth
That could have made life fair!
Like autumn's leaf, detached and sere,
I yield to wind and wave;
My only wish, a brief career,—
My only hope, a grave.

Would'st know why I an exile roam?
Why, sadly, I give o'er
All hope of joy, and friends, and home,
Henceforth forevermore?

Perchance I've worn upon my sleeve
My heart for daws to peck,
And trusted to the false, who leave
The trusting heart a wreck.

Perchance no 'troops of friends' I leave,
For whom a tear may flow,
And yet I cannot choose but grieve
That I am glad to go.
A chastened and a saddened soul
To other climes I bear;
Most happy if oblivion's bowl
May be its portion there.

LA BELLE FRANCE.

OH FRANCE ! 'tis true that thou art fair,
That thou art France *la belle* !
And how to please, with graces rare,
Thy children know full well ;
And yet thou art not fair to me,
Whose heart is far away from thee.

And PARIS ! to the modern world
What Athens was to Greece, —
In whose gay tumult's joyous whirl
All may be found — but peace, —
Thou, Paris, art not gay to me,
Whose mind and heart dwell not with thee.

The sculptured columns of thy squares,
Thy palaces immense,
Thy chiselled statues, household lares,
Thy leafy gardens dense,
May charm thy children,— but, for me,
My heart is far away from thee.

Where is the exile's heart — and where
Incessant turns his gaze ?
It seeks remembered home — and there
Lives o'er its happier days.
Thus, Paris, 'mid thy throngs to be,
Is saddest solitude to me.

VERS SUR LE BUSTE DE MONSIEUR
DE LAMARTINE,

ADDRESSES PAR LUI AU SCULPTEUR, MONSIEUR LE COMTE
D'ORSAY.

I.

QUAND le bronze écumant dans ton moule
d'argile,

Léguera par ta main mon image fragile

A l'œil indifférent des hommes qui naîtront,

Et que, passant leurs doigts sur ces tempes
ridées,

Comme un lit dévasté du torrent des idées,

Pleins de doute, ils diront entre eux : De qui ce
front ?

II.

Est-ce un soldat debout frappé pour la patrie ?

Un poète qui chante, un pontife qui prie ?

Un orateur qui parle aux flots séditieux ?
Est-ce un tribun de paix soulevé par la houle,
Offrant, le cœur gonflé, sa poitrine à la foule,
Pour que sa liberté remontât pure aux cieux ?

III.

Car dans ce pied qui lutte, et dans ce front qui
vibre,
Dans ces lèvres de feu qu'entr'ouvre un souffle
libre,
Dans ce cœur qui bondit, dans ce geste serein,
Dans cette arche du flanc que l'extase soulève,
Dans ce bras qui commande et dans cet œil qui
rêve,
Phidias a pétri sept ames dans l'airain.

IV.

Sept ames, Phidias ! et je n'en ai plus une !
De tout ce qui vécut je subis la fortune.
Arme cent fois brisée entre les mains du temps,
Je sème de tronçons ma route vers la tombe,

Et le siècle hébété dit : ‘ Voyez comme tombe
A moitié du combat chacun des combattans ! ’

V.

Celui-là chanta Dieu, les idoles le tuent !
Au mépris des petits les grands le prostituent :
Notre sang, disent-ils, pourquoi l'épargnas-tu ?
Nous en aurions taché la griffe populaire ! . . .
Et le lion couché luit dit avec colère :
Pourquoi m'as-tu calmé ? Ma force est ma vertu.

VI.

Va, brise, ô Phidias, ta dangereuse épreuve ;
Jettes-en les débris dans le feu, dans le fleuve,
De peur qu'un faible cœur, de doute confondu,
Ne dise en contemplant ces affronts sur ma joue,
‘ Laissons aller le monde à son courant de boue,
Et que faute d'un cœur un siècle soit perdu ! ’

VII.

Oui, brise, ô Phidias ! dérobe ce visage
A la postérité, qui ballotte une image

De l'Olympe à l'égout, de la gloire à l'oubli.
Au pilori du temps n'expose pas mon ombre !
Je suis las des soleils, laisse mon urne à l'ombre.
Le bonheur de la mort, c'est d'être enseveli !

VIII.

Que la feuille d'hiver au vent des nuits semée,
Que du coteau natal l'argile encore aimée
Couvrent vite mon front moulé sous son linceul !
Je ne veux de vos bruits qu'un souffle dans la
 brise,
Un nom inachevé dans un cœur qui se brise ;
J'ai vécu pour la foule, et je veux dormir seul.

TRANSLATION

OF LINES ON THE BUST OF M. DE LAMARTINE, ADDRESSED BY
HIM TO THE COUNT D'ORSAY, THE SCULPTOR.

HEREAFTER, when this fragile form,
Transmitted by thy art,
Is viewed by men as yet unborn,
Who, then, the critic's part
With cool indifference will play,
Passing their fingers o'er
The wrinkled surface of the clay,
Which breathes, alas! no more,—
' Whose front is this?' they'll doubting ask:
' What era his, and what his task?'

Is it a soldier's manly face,
 Who for his country fought ?
A rapt evangelist who prays ?
 A poet, half distraught ?
Is it an orator, who quelled
 Sedition's headlong rage, —
The heart that in his bosom swelled
 Freely exposed in gaze,
That new-found freedom, hardly won,
Might live, when his brief course was run ?

For in this foot, so firmly set,
 And in this forehead broad,
These parted lips, where seems as yet
 To glow the fiery word,
The panting heart and arched breast.
 Gesture and eye serene,
The arm enforcing their behest,
 With power all but supreme, —
Phidias ! seven souls appear,
Imprinted on the bust you rear.

Seven, alas ! while I no more
Dare claim a single one !
Like all of earth, I leave the shore
Of life, my work undone.
A weapon broken in the strife
Is my fit emblem now ;
My pathway to the tomb is rife
With fragments shining low.
' And see,' exclaims the stupid age,
' How fall, midway, those who engage !'

Sang he of God ? Anon the rage
Of idols crushed his lyre !
Turned he aside from history's page
To quench sedition's fire, —
Stemmed he the fury of the throng,
Subduing all who heard,
And shielding fallen foes from wrong, —
What, then, was his reward ?
Spurned by the great he saved before,
To vulgar scorn they turned him o'er.

Go, go, destroy what thou hast done,
Thy dangerous work conceal;
Lest feeble, doubting men may shun
To serve the common weal;
And say, while looking on my cheek,
Outraged as it has been,
They wish not such reward to seek
For aiding fellow-men.
Thus might the turbid current roll,
And all be lost, for want of soul.

Yes, break at once this living bust,
Destroy it while you may;
Expose me not to the unjust
Of a long future day.
Respect my shade, oh, let the dead
In genial darkness lie!
The sun fatigues me, and I dread
Of time the pillory.
It is enough in life to weep,
Oh, let the dead in quiet sleep!

The loved clay of my native hills

My winding-sheet shall be ;

The murmur of my native rills

A requiem for me.

Let withered leaves adorn my shroud,

Which night winds lightly move ;

More stable than the thoughtless crowd,

Less changing than its love.

My name, half uttered o'er my grave,

By one crushed heart, is all I crave.

TO ARAMINTA.

I would describe your little nose,
And your luxurious mouth,
So richly lined with dewy rose, —
Your breath, like the sweet south.

But ah ! those signal marks I trace,
Still warn me to forbear ;
They're plainly written on your face,
Remaining ever there.

Beneath your eyelids dark, I see
Deep printed circles blue,
Which, faithful, guard the memory
Of loves forgot by you.

And then, my Araminta dear,
By counting o'er your flames,
I am reminded of your years
While summing up their names.

Your lovers' names, more numerous than
The pearly teeth you wear,
Command me to forego the plan
To paint your beauties rare.

LES ÉTOILES.

SAIS-TU pourquoi, ma douce Reine,
Les étoiles du firmament
Ont cette lueur incertaine
Qui fait rêver si tristement ?
C'est quelles marquent le passage
De ceux que nous avons perdus ;
C'est que chaque étoile est l'image
D'un pauvre cœur qui ne bat plus.

C'est que chaque étoile qui brille
Parle à quelque âme d'ici bas ;
C'est ton amant, o jeune fille,
Qui te dit : ' Ne m'oubliez pas !

Oh, plains sa douleur solitaire,
Pleure ses beaux jours disparus,
Cherche en ton cœur une prière
Pour ce cœur qui ne battra plus.'

Vois tu cette étoile isolée,
Qui file, qui file et s'enfuit ?
C'est une âme, hélas ! désolée,
Qui va dans l'éternelle nuit.
C'est qu'ici bas, sa sœur abjure
Des serments devant Dieu reçus,
Le cœur qui bat devient parjure
Au pauvre cœur qui ne bat plus.

Tu me verras, après ma vie,
Vers toi quelques soirs revenir
Te demander, ô ma chérie,
Une larme, un doux souvenir.

O, qu'alors ton regard se voile

Que ton cœur pense aux jours perdus,

Et sourit à ma pauvre étoile

Lorsque mon cœur ne battra plus.

THE STARS.

[TRANSLATION OF THE PRECEDING.]

Know'st thou the cause, my gentle queen,
 Why all those stars on high,
Uncertain, pale, and dimly seen,
 Make us with sadness sigh?
It is because they mark the flight
 Of lost ones we deplore;
Each star is sent to guide and light
 A heart that beats no more.

It is because each shining pearl
 With some soul here communes;
One is thy lover, oh young girl,
 And thus he importunes:—

‘ Forget not one now lost to thee,
Whose days on earth are o’er;
Let thy true heart still beat for me,
Whose heart shall beat no more.’

Seest thou that solitary star,
Fast fading in its flight?
A soul,—it seeks to hide afar
In everlasting night;
Because its sister soul revolts
From vows it made before,—
Because the beating heart is false
To the heart that beats no more.

A trembling star, when I am dead,
My spirit will appear,—
And hovering fondly o’er thy head,
Demand of thee a tear.

Whene'er thou seest me floating there,
Think then of moments o'er ;
With kindness greet my gentle star,
When this heart beats no more.

CHANSON.

À quoi bon entendre
Les oiseaux des bois !
L'oiseau le plus tendre
Chante dans ta voix.

Que Dieu montre ou voile
Les astres des cieux,
La plus pure étoile
Brille dans tes yeux.

Qu' Avril renouvelle
Le jardin en fleur !
La fleur la plus belle
Fleurit dans ton cœur.

Cet oiseau de flamme,
Cet astre du jour,
Cette fleur de l'âme
S'appelle l'amour.

SONG.

[TRANSLATION OF THE PRECEDING.]

How can we wish to hear
The song of warbling bird,
When thou, dear one, art near,
And thy sweet voice is heard ?

What cause have we to prize
The brightest star of even,
When purer are thine eyes
Than all the stars of heaven ?

In vain the brilliant rose
Its fragrance may impart ;
The sweetest flower that grows
Still blossoms in thy heart.

The bird's most witching troll,
The purest star above,
The perfume of the soul,
Is that which men call Love!

THE BLOSSOM BY THE FOUNTAIN.

In nature's garden, many an hour
I've roamed with bosom free,
And sang the praise of many a flower,
As each attracted me.

A flaunting rose first caught my view,
And robbed me of my rest ;
My eyes were dazzled by its hue,
Its warmth inflamed my breast.

But ah ! the rose attracted all,
With its bewitching gaze ;
Yet never kept one heart in thrall,
So vagrant were its rays.

I next addressed a lily proud,
 So seeming pure and fair ;
And bent me humbly with the crowd,
 Before its altar there.

But soon I found the selfish flower
 My passion could not move ;
'That, cold as pale, in beauty's bower,
 The lily could not love.

And thus the world I wandered o'er,
 Not finding what I sought, —
That faithful, tender, sweet amour, —
 The love that is not bought.

At length a drooping flower I spied,
 Hid in a mountain gorge ;
To raise and cherish it I hied
 To thy clear fount, St. George.

It proved a modest violet
Concealed with timid care,
Shrinking from public view, and yet
The flower was sweetly fair.

It flashed not like the fervid rose,
With bright consuming flame ;
Nor, like the frigid lily, froze
All hearts that near it came.

But with a mild and grateful glow
It met my kind caress,
And ever seemed most blest to know
It had the power to bless.

Thus all I've sought is found at last ;
The wearying search is o'er ;
My breast its shelter from the blast
Shall be forevermore.

A CASE IN EQUITY.

As near the lake I walked apart,
Conning thy beauties o'er,
I lost, by chance, a foolish heart
Upon the pebbly shore ;
And that same heart by you was found,
While strolling o'er that fairy ground.

And still the bauble you retain,
Though valueless to thee ;
Regardless of the secret pain.
Its loss occasions me.
My heart was all I had to lose,—
Yet to restore it you refuse.

Now how shall we the cause adjust,

Or to what court repair ?

I would not plead, if plead I must,

Without a hearing fair.

You have two hearts, instead of one,

And I, since yesterday, have none.

Were you disposed, we might arrange

Our claims with balance true ;

You'd give your heart in fair exchange

For mine, retained by you,—

And thus the cause of all my pain

Might prove to both a blissful gain.

THE FLOWER AND THE BUTTERFLY.

LEAVE me not here alone to die,
Thou beautiful of wing!
The flower implored the butterfly,
One sunny day in Spring.

Why this sad difference in our fate?
My all of life is here;
While you, on golden wings elate,
Float gaily from my sphere.

And yet they say we both are flowers,
And strong resemblance bear;
And you have loved, in happy hours,
My fragrant gifts to share.

Oh, may those gifts embalm your wing,
Wherever you may rove ;
And in your flight their fragrance fling
On all that you may love !

But why desert this pleasant spot,
Where first you learned to love ?
Believe me, dearest, you will not
Your happiness improve.

Rest, I implore, take root with me,
Strive to be happy here ;
Or let me have bright wings like thee,
Your errant life to share !

Alas, for that poor pleading flower !
The insect vain has flown,
Where poisonous plants of fatal power
Have marked him for their own.

AN EPISTLE.

Is it a sound of joy or fear
That, o'er the ocean wide,
This day comes murmuring in my ear,
'Young Agnes is a bride!'

A thousand fears my heart beset,
Fears that I may not chide,
That thou, dear orphan, mayst regret
Thou hast become a bride.

Yet o'er my fears glad hopes prevail,
That Agnes, the bright-eyed,
In coming time may ne'er bewail
The day she was a bride.

May he, who with love's cunning wile
Has won thee to his side,
Who shares henceforth thy 'placid smile,'
Make thee a happy bride.

WHAT THE NIGHTINGALE SINGS.

Love! oh heart oppressed with sadness;
Love! that hope may light thy brow;
Love! and fill thy heart with gladness;
Love! and with tender joy o'erflow.

Love! God provides what we require;
The stars for night, the sun above,
The branch for bird, a time for prayer,
Flowers for odours, hearts for love.

To love, is to prolong life's spring,
To taste on earth of heavenly bliss,
To flee the world on seraph wing,
With one loved soul to live in peace.

It is to be baptized with fire ;
It is to be of God's elect ;
'Tis to yield all, with sweet desire,
Receive back all, and still expect.

THE ROSE AND THE GRAVE.

THE tomb once asked the rose,—'t is said,—
What dost thou with the tears
That heaven each night on thee hath shed,
Through all departed years ?

Since you to question me presume,
Oh grave ! the rose replies,
I give them back, in sweet perfume,
Each morning, to the skies.

But what dost thou, I ask in turn,
And may an answer crave, —
With all the loved we daily mourn,
Thou ever open grave ?

Dost thou not know, replies the tomb,

Sweet rose, that we are even ?

I make of each, within my womb,

An angel pure for heaven.

JE NE VOUS AIME PLUS.

Vous defendez que je vous aime !
Eh bien ! je vous obeirai ;
Plus d'amour, d'esperance même,
S'il le faut je m'eloignerai.
Mais quand à vous oublier si vite,
Tous les serments que j'ai reçus,
C'est en pleurant que je vous quitte,
Pourtant je ne vous aime plus.

Malgré la douleur que m'accable,
Malgré votre froid abandon,
Lorsque vous seul êtes coupable,
J'ose implorer votre pardon.

Même quand vous ne m'êtes plus chère,
Quand je n'obtiens que vos refus,
C'est encore vous que je préfère ;
Pourtant, je ne vous aime plus.
Non, non, je ne vous aime plus.

Au bal le plaisir vous appelle,
On vous attend — allez charmer,
Un autre vous trouvera belle,
Mais je le plains s'il doit vous aimer.
Mais quand je songe, oh mon amice,
À tous les biens que j'ai perdus,
Pour vous je donnerai ma vie ; —
Pourtant je ne vous aime plus.
Non, non, je ne vous aime plus.

I WILL LOVE NO MORE.

[TRANSLATION OF THE PRECEDING.]

‘CEASE thou to love me evermore!’
Is thy command:—and I obey.
For this I left my native shore,
Unloving, hopelessly, to stray.
Though to forget the vows you made,
I freely own beyond my power;
Though scalding tears my eyes invade,
Obeying, I will love no more.

Though mine the grief, though mine the pain,
Though yours the cold and fickle heart;
Though you alone have rent the chain,
Pray pardon me that thus we part.

Since now to you no longer dear,
Though former hopes I still deplore,
Though I can none to you prefer,
Obeying, I will love no more.

All pleasures now on you await, —
Go, charm the crowd in fashion's hall,
That others still may find their fate
Attached to yours beyond recall.
And though my heart and brain are rife
With all I've lost and must deplore,
Though still for you I'd yield my life,
Obeying, I will love no more.

PLEASURE.

OH why art thou still ever fleeting?

I ask'd of Pleasure sweet :

Why take to wing, our hope still cheating,

The moment when we meet?

Thank thou the gods, soft Pleasure sighed,

That thus I pass away ;

Were it my nature to abide,

With *them* had been my stay.

The tears of grief, the smiles of mirth,

To mortals now I measure ;

For, all that's sweet or sad on earth,

Is dawning, dying pleasure.

LE BOUQUET DU PAGE.

METTEZ-LE moi, c'est pour vous plaire
Que je cède à votre désir ;
Mettez-le moi, mais du mystere
Ne me forcez pas à rougir.
D'amour en acceptant ce gage,
Certes ce n'est pas sans effroi ;
Mais il ornera mon corsage, —
Mettez-le moi, mettez-le moi.

Mettez-le moi, beau petit page,
Un bouquet ça n'engage à rien ;
Mettez-le moi, mais soyez sage,
On vous cite pour un vaurien.

De ces belles fleurs je vous jure
J'aurai très grand soin sur ma foi ;
Un bouquet sied à ma ceinture, —
Mettez-le moi, mettez-le moi.

Mettez-le moi vite, je tremble
Qu'on nous surprenne tous les deux ;
Mettez-le moi vite, il me semble
Que quelqu'un approche en ces lieux.
Dans ce bois sombre et solitaire
Mes craintes sont justes je crois, —
Demain je dois être rosière —
Mettez-le moi, mettez-le moi.

Alors, sans tarder davantage,
Car il était nuit tout à fait,
S'empressa le beau petit page
De mettre son joli bouquet.

La jeune et gentille bergère
Répétait dans un doux émoi,
Dépechez-vous, j'entends ma mère —
Mettez-le moi, mettez-le moi.

THE BOUQUET OF THE PRETTY PAGE.

[TRANSLATED FROM THE PRECEDING.]

GIVE it to me, — I yield to you,
And all my maiden terrors hush ;
Give it to me, — but still be true,
Nor cause me for this hour to blush.
The fragrance which it doth impart
May prove a fatal gift to me ;
Yet would I wear it near my heart, —
Give it to me, — oh, give it me.

Give it to me, my pretty page,
A trifling gift to nothing binds ;
Give it to me, — but oh, be sage, —
'They say you're fickle as the winds.

Yes, I would wear the fragrant flower,
As the sweet proof of love to me,
If only for one happy hour ;—
Give it to me, — oh, give it me.

Give it me quickly, — for I fear
That we may be surprised ere long ;
Give it me quickly, — for I hear
The voices of the curious throng.
In this deep shaded solitude
I'm not from apprehension free ;
There's some one coming through the wood !
Give it to me, — oh, give it me.

The pretty page, without delay,
Under the friendly veil of night,
With pleasure gave her his bouquet,
Thrilling her pulses with delight.

While she, with mingled joy and fear,
And sobs of tender ecstasy,
Cried,—Haste! be quick! mamma I hear!
Give it to me,—oh, give it me.

MY PREFERENCE.

To drown their griefs in rosy wine,
Some grasp the flowing bowl;
Alas! the false, seductive vine
Can only drown the soul.

I make no such experiment;
My heart my only guide,
Seeking the haven of content,
Through life I gently glide.

My sure resource for purest joy,
In this my dull exile,
For happiness without alloy,
Is thy approving smile.

My remedy for deepest grief,
When all is sad and drear,
A never failing sweet relief,
Thy sympathetic tear.

Thy smile! thy tear! what want I more?
Or what can dearer be?
What need of glory, wealth or power,
When I have these from thee?

REJECT NOT LOVE.

REJECT not love! thou, young and fair!
Affection is of life the sum,—
What all regret, what all desire,—
Of all our hopes the crowning dome.

Reject not love! when youth hath flown,
Love, only, can the soul sustain;
Ambition, gold, and glory's crown,
Leave void the heart they ever stain.

Reject not love! congenial minds
Find happiness in its embrace;
Cast not its fragrance to the winds,
But make thy soul its dwelling-place.

Reject not love! you bear, concealed,
A trembling lyre within your breast,
Which to its magic touch will yield
Sweet tones that only greet the blest.

Reject not love! there is a charm
In holy wedded love's caress,—
For every ill a soothing balm,
The heart's sole refuge in distress.

SONNET.

LIVING, I die ; burning, I drown ;
With fever heat come freezing chills ;
All pleasure is beset with ills,
With sorrow still all joys are strown.
My smiles with tears are washed away,
And all goes wrong, when love's unkind ;
Ah, sure the winged god is blind,
Or he would be content to stay
With one condemned to drag his chain.
In dark despair I oft should sink,
Did not hope sometimes soothe my pain
But ah ! my hopes prove ever vain ;
They do but lead to sorrow's brink,
And give me of her cup to drink.

TO THE
AUTHORESS OF THE 'QUEENS OF SPAIN,'
ON HER DEPARTURE FOR EUROPE.

PAINTER of queens! thyself a queen
O'er thousands of adoring slaves,
Go, seek the worlds you've never seen,
Across the broad Atlantic's waves.

True offspring of the sunny south,
With flashing eye and soul of flame,
Which all the sorrows of your youth
Have been so impotent to tame;

With brilliant intellect to charm,
With high ambition still inspired,
You must all enmity disarm,
And there, as here, you'll be admired.

Go, bright one, go to other climes ;
Your destiny impels you on ;
But still remember former times,
And those true friends that first you won.

Their eyes will follow your career ;
Their hearts will joy in your success ;
Though absent, you will still be dear ;
And memory, still, their hearts will bless.

AN EPISTLE.

AT fifty-three no more a youth,
To you I may indite
The plain, unvarnished, honest truth ;
'Tis wearisome to write.

While love conceals its smouldering fire,
Friendship is babbling quite ;
And when to talk I most desire,
'Tis tedious but to write.

I think, just now, that with a kiss
My pains you should requite ;
And feel, while dreaming of the bliss,
'Tis very dull to write.

But, as your lines these eyes may see,
Perhaps, with some delight,
I feel that it is still, to me,
A pleasure sweet to write.

SOUVENIRS.

IN other days, when I was sad,
When naught my care could wile,
What never failed to make me glad?
The sunshine of thy smile.

When friends, estranged, looked coldly down,
What then could me rejoice?
What then repaid the world's dread frown?
The music of thy voice.

Why do the gentle stars of even
Now ever wake a sigh?
Because those trembling orbs of heaven
Remind me of thine eye.

Why watch I April's opening flowers,
Revived from winter's death ?
I seek, amid her fragrant bowers,
The perfume of thy breath.

Thine eye hath ceased to beam for me,
Thy smile I may not seek,
Thy fragrant breath no more may play
Upon my fevered cheek.

Thy voice again may never steal
On my delighted ear,
But I can never cease to feel
That thou, alone, wert dear.

A FANTASY.

OH, when I sleep, draw near my couch,
As once to Petrarch Laura came,
And if, by chance, thy breath should touch
My cheek, it straight would glow with flame.

On my pale brow, where a dull dream
Has held, too long, oppressive sway,
Permit thy starry eye to beam,
And all its gloom would pass away.

And should my lip thy gentle kiss,
Though only in a dream, partake,
My soul, all radiant with bliss,
With love and joy would quick awake.

SEPARATION AND REPARATION.

ALL animated things must die
When soul and body part;
Thou, my true soul, dost from me fly, —
Where art thou, errant heart?

Leave me not thus alone and faint, —
How can we live apart?
Thou dost not hear my feeble plaint, —
Where art thou, fickle heart?

Return, my soul, ere 'tis too late
To save thy other part;
At least, return to weep my fate, —
Where art thou, cruel heart?

Oh! welcome, welcome to my breast,
Repentant better part;
Here in my bosom sweetly rest,
Poor bruised and weary heart.

A REFLECTION.

THE silk-worm's fate is, in some eyes,
One which, of all, they most would prize.
In youth to labor hard he tries,
 Then sleeps through middle life ;
And in voluptuous joy he dies,
 When old age ends the strife.

The fate of man is different,
And fewer joys to him are lent.
He tastes slight pleasure in his youth,
 Contends with cares through life,
With age come fears of that dread truth,
 That death ends not the strife.

A GIFT.

SINCE each soul, here below,
Gives to some one,
The warm Promethean glow
Of passion's sun ;

Since each thing here bestows,
In field or grove,
Either its thorn or rose
Upon its love ;

Since every rippling wave
Gives to the shore
Which, passing, it may lave
One kiss or more ;

Since April gives the leaf
 Its murmur sweet ;
Since night gives the relief
 Of soothing sleep ;

In this sweet hour of rest,
 Thinking of thee,
I give thee what of best
 I have in me ;

Receive my love for you,
 Cherished for years,
Though, like the evening dew,
 It comes in tears.

THE REASON WHY.

'THY gracious form, thy soul divine,
 Thine eye of fire,
Whose flashes but too well define
 Love's fond desire,
Make not the charm that still endears
 Thy heart to mine ;
'Tis that I met thee, bathed in tears,
 At sorrow's shrine.

Though angels strewed my path with flowers
 When thou wert nigh,
I could forget those happy hours
 Without a sigh ;

But the deep sadness thou hast known,
 I can't forget;
The murmur of thy plaintive tone,
 It lingers yet.

THE TWO AGES.

THERE is an age, life's dearest treasure,
In which gay youth pursues the traces
Of glowing love's absorbing pleasure,
A slave to beauty and the graces.

There is an age, a sombre season,
When man to wisdom makes pretence ;
When he mistakes his fears for reason,—
For wisdom his impuissance.

THE SWALLOWS.

I LIKE to see the swallows play
About my roof ;
Their little voices seem to say
Behold the proof
That love which in the soul has birth,
Fervent and pure,
Is the sole sentiment of earth
That can endure.

Their joyous notes proclaim the Spring,
The season sweet,
When warbling birds all spread the wing
For love's retreat.

To the same nests that first they knew,
 They still repair;
To one sole passion, deep and true,
 They constant are.

But when the frosts of autumn sere
 Make fall the leaves,
Again they will assemble here,
 Under my eaves;
Seeking protection, from the storms
 Of winter drear,
For faithful hearts and tender forms,
 To them most dear.

AN EXHORTATION.

Our life is but an instant's space ;
Then let us well improve
The fleeting moments as they pass,
In faith, and hope, and love.

Faith in a God beneficent ;
Faith in our destiny ;
Faith in our kind, whom God hath lent
To bear us company.

With hope of usefulness below,
In this our transient home ;
With hope, that as on earth we sow,
We'll reap in life to come.

With genial love for all our race ;

With special love for one ;

With love to God, whose sovereign grace

Redeems us by his Son.

MIDNIGHT.

THE wooing zephyr, soft and sweet,
Is playing with the flowers ;
And lovers' feet, with step discreet,
Are seeking beauty's bowers :
'Tis noon of night.

The slumber deep of peaceful sleep,
Her drooping eyelids close ;
While I, condemned to wake and weep,
Still vainly seek repose :
'Tis noon of night.

At last there comes a pleasing dream,
 To soothe the lover's heart ;
Alas ! with early morning's beam
 That vision must depart :
 'Tis noon of night.

THE EXILE AND THE SWALLOW.

POOR little swallow, why in fear
Dost thou thus seek to fly from me ?
Come, build thy nest beside me here,
For I an exile am, like thee.

A cruel fate, from thy dear home,
Perhaps has driven thee to me ;
Why then wouldst thou still further roam ?
I, also, am exiled, like thee.

In this retreat, by hazard met,
There still is room for thee and me ;
Here sympathy shall soothe regret,
For I an exile am, like thee.

With the warm smile of opening Spring,
Thou'lt leave this *triste* abode, and me;
For thy dear home thou'lt plume thy wing:
Ah, would I were a bird like thee.

Thou'lt visit each remembered spot,
The nest, the brook, the rock, the tree;
While exile, still, must be my lot:
Ah, thou art happier far than me.

INQUIRY AND CONCLUSION.

BRIGHT angel of the azure wing,
May I demand of you,
What are those songs you always sing
In yonder realms of blue?
What is the theme of praise and prayer
That seems resounding ever there?
‘The harmonies above,
Which oft on earth you hear,
Are but our hymns of love
To those we hold most dear.’

Tell me, thou angel, dark and fierce,
Of Pluto’s dread domain,
What is the passion most perverse
In all thy realms of pain?

What are the torments most severe,
Of which souls suffer there as here ?

‘ The suffering below,
Most hard for souls to bear,
From earthly love doth flow,
When it becomes despair.’

Thus happiness in heaven above,
And misery below,
From the same earthly passion, love,
In equal measure flow ;
And for that reason I decline
To worship at soft beauty’s shrine.

Too well for my repose
I’ve loved, in former years ;
’Tis time the heart should close
When it distils but tears.

TIME AND MEMORY.

My fleeting years behind me crowd,
In dim and sad array,
Like autumn's faded leaves that shroud
The path in which I stray;
But yet thine image in my soul,
Embellished by regret,
Still lives and reigns without control,
As when at first we met.

My temples, by time's heavy hand,
Are sprinkled o'er with gray,
And o'er my face its fatal wand
Hath traced its wasting way;

But to our hearts, that ne'er grow old,
Is granted still the power
To keep, embalmed, what they infold
In young love's happy hour.

And thus I see and hear but thee,
In crowds or deserts lone ;
Each wave reflects thy form to me,
Each zephyr breathes thy tone.
Thus years are but one constant day,
Unnoticed in their flight,
For memory's incessant play
Allows my heart no night.

A BACCHANAL.

SHORT time on earth we have to live,
That time then let us gaily pass ;
To drink is man's prerogative,
And gushing joy flows from the glass.

Let others seek bright glory's crown,
With ceaseless toil and courage rare ;
They feel, with all their high renown,
That wine alone can conquer care.

Why need we study history ?
Are not all epochs still the same ?
The man who learns the mystery
Of drinking, knows enough for fame.

'Tis loss of time to wander o'er
This stupid earth from sea to sea,
While ruby wine retains the power
To make the earth turn round for thee.

With telescopes that search the skies
Let learned fools consume their leisure;
There's deeper lore in sparkling eyes,
And goblets best discover pleasure.

SPEAK NOT TO ME.

SPEAK not to me of sentiment :

Know'st thou of love the pains ?

Know'st thou the bitter aliment

Of those who wear its chains ?

Hast ever lost thine own esteem ?

Hast ever felt debased

By jealousy's sad nightmare dream,

That would not be effaced ?

In absence, hast thou felt how vain

Was reason to impart

A balm for that corroding pain,

The sickness of the heart ?

Hast known the feeling love inspires,
What torments are its share,
When longing, lingering hope expires,
And it becomes despair ?

When all these feelings thou hast known,
These sufferings and fears,
And felt that love can ne'er atone
For all its scalding tears, —
Then may'st thou speak of sentiment,
And vaunt love's tender ravishment.

ADVICE TO A. H.

A DASHING youth is hard to find,
With taper form and vapid mind,
Who does not run from street to street,
And oaths of constant love repeat,
To all, the same in kind.

But if in tranquil joy you'd live,
And worthily your heart would give,
Avoid those vain, inconstant beaux,
Who are to sober wedlock foes,
Drones of the human hive.

CHERISHED MEMORIES.

SINCE thy rich lip mine own hath pressed ;
Since thy sweet breath I have inhaled ;
Since my pale brow hath dared to rest
On charms that from the world were veiled ;

Since my enraptured ear hath heard,
Mysterious echo of thy heart,
That low and gently whispered word
That made thy soul of mine a part ;

Since I have kissed thy tears away,
By sorrow from thy heart-strings wrung ;
Since I have seen thee smiling, gay,
And felt from whence thy joy hath sprung ;

I now can say to ruthless Time, —
Pass on, thou canst not bring me pain ;
I bear with me, in every clime,
A charm that will my soul sustain.

Pass on, old Time, and mark thy flight
With many a drooping, dying flower ;
One blossom still defies thy might,
Immortal in its lonely bower.

'That blossom is love's fragrant rose,
By dear illusions nursed for years,
'That in my heart perennial grows,
To bless me with sweet souvenirs.

TO LIZZIE.

Oh, if there be a smooth, green sward,
By gentlest dew-drops fed,
Where sweetest flowers claim regard,
In brightest colors clad,
Where every careless, laughing child
May fill its lap with blossoms wild,
May it still be the path unsoiled,
On which thy foot may tread.

And if there be a manly breast,
The which I may suppose,
Whose truth and firmness all attest, —
Where stainless honor glows, —

And if with ardor it should beat,
Thy dawning tenderness to meet, —
May it become the pillow sweet,
Where thy head may repose.

And if there be a dream of love,
Fragrant as dewy rose,
Bestowed on mortals from above,
When the young heart o'erflows, —
May that sweet dream, with blessing rife,
By making thee a happy wife,
Make sure a haven, where, for life,
Thy heart may find repose.

AN UNSENT REPLY.

THY charming letter asks of me

To say what I demand,—
To tell my wishes all to thee,
From this far distant land.

Ah, would I could! My wishes are
As countless as the sands;
I've one for every grace you wear,
And each thine ear demands.

But when the warm and pressing throng
To utter I desire,
My words still falter on my tongue,
And on my lips expire.

Were not each fervent wish of mine
So sentinell'd by fear,
My heart would softly breathe to thine
The wish that thou wert here.

And if I dared, I'd ask of thee
Affection's sweet return ;
I'd have thee own a love for me,
Like that with which I burn.

But ah, these wishes unexpressed
Forever must remain ;
Only in death's eternal rest
Can we e'er meet again.

LE RÊVE DE LA CHÂTELAINE.

Si tu veux, belle dormeuse,
Avec moi jusqu' à demain,
Suivre la brume amoureuse
Dans le monde aérien,
Je te prêterai des ailes
D'azur semées d'étincelles
D'or, de neige, et de saphir ;
Et par les célestes sphères,
Comme deux flammes légères
Nous jouerons avec zéphir.

Car je suis, ô jeune fille !
Je suis l'étoile qui brille
À l'aube de chaque jour ;

Je suis l'avenir immense,
Le printemps de l'espérance —
Je suis un rêve d'amour.

Les anges du ciel envient
L'azur brillant de mes yeux —
Et mes cheveux blonds défient
Leurs souples et fins cheveux ;
L'araignée industrieuse,
Dans la nuit, silencieuse,
A tissé mon éventail ;
Et les rouges cochenilles
Ont brodé leurs étincelles
En fleurs d'or sur mon camail.

C'est moi qui dis au Trouvère
Les récits des anciens preux
Qu'à la table hospitalière
Il chante en vers harmonieux.
C'est moi qui dis au flot : Rêve !
À l'étoile d'or : Soulève

Ta paupière aux cils tremblants !
Et c'est moi qui donne aux fées
Leurs ceintures agrafées
De rubis étincellants.

J'ai des palais de nerages,
Lambrissés de pourpre et d'or,
Où mes sylphides volages
Vont danser au son du cor.
J'ai des grottes isolées
De diamants étoilées
Où j'élève mes trylbis ;
Et parfois je me repose
Dans un calice de rose,
Ou sur un char de rubis.

Si tu voulais, châtelaine,
Suivre mon vol radieux,
Je te ferais souveraine
De mes lutins amoureux ;

Je te donnerais des pages,
Des trésors, des équipages,
À ruiner l'Orient.
Et tu n'aurais rien à faire
Qu'à songer à ton amant.

Le soir tu verrais mes gnômes
Se poursuivre échevelis,
Et voltiger mes atômes
Comme des cristaux ailés.
Tu pourrais jeune dormeuse
Baigner ta taille amoureuse
Dans mes laes d'or et d'azur ;
Et par la vague bercée
Laisser dormir ta pensée
Sur ton front candide et pure.

Tu verrais la Poésie
Sous des arcs-en-ciel d'éclairs,
Verser à flots l'harmonie
Et ses parfums dans les airs.

Tu verrais le ciel, les anges,
Les saints groupés en phalanges —
Mais hélas ! j'entends du bruit —
Adieu belle ensommeillée —
Sans toi je prends ma volée
Dans les ombres de la nuit.

THE CHATELAINE'S DREAM.

[TRANSLATION OF THE PRECEDING.]

CHARMING slumberer, wilt thou float
With me till morn appear,
Among those airy shapes remote,
In yon resplendent sphere?
I'll lend thee wings on which to soar,
Of azure blent with gold,
With dazzling gems all sprinkled o'er,
Enchanting to behold, —
And there, until the dawn of day,
With sportive zephyr will we play.

I am, oh maiden fair,
That orb of upper air

That ushers in the morn ;
I am the star of hope,
That in thy horoscope
Foreshadows love's sweet dawn.

The brilliant azure of my eye
With envy angels see ;
My bright and sunny locks defy
Their ardent rivalry.
My robe, by busy spiders wrought,
In midnight's silent hour,
Is with a magic virtue fraught,
Of all-subduing power.
With flashing gold the cochineal
Has broidered o'er my light camail.

'Tis I who teach the Troubadour
To sing, with witching art,
The tales of high chivalric lore
That win the virgin's heart ;

'Tis I who calm the surging main,
And lull the waves to sleep,
That maids may hear love's sweet refrain
Float o'er the silent deep ;
And I, to fays diminutive,
Their ruby-clasped girdles give.

I have a castle in the air,
Thy pleasure to enhance,
Where troops of sylphids, young and fair,
To thrilling music dance ;
And I have grottoes cool and fresh,
Perfumed with blossoms rare ;
Where rubies meet the diamond's flash,
To which thou canst repair,
And yield thy limbs to sweet repose
Within the calix of a rose.

Of fragrant dews composed, I have
A clear and placid lake,

Where thou, in its caressing wave,
Thy daily bath canst take ;
Where thou canst join my sprites at play,
Those tiny things of air,
Who dip and splash in frolic gay,
Like winged crystals there ;
And where, in innocence secure,
No blush shall tinge thy forehead pure.

And thou shalt be the lovely queen
Of all my spirits bright,
If thou wilt venture, chatelaine,
To share my upward flight ;
And pages I will give to thee,
And sparkling gems to wear,
If thou wilt only seek with me
My castle in the air ;
And all thy life, while there above,
Shall be one blissful dream of love.

And there, for thee, sweet Poesy,
In robes of rainbow dressed,
With words of soothing melody,
Shall charm thy hour of rest.
There shalt thou see the angels pure,
Whose every thought is love,
And saints escaped from earth's allure
To shine as stars above ;
There shalt thou see . . . but hark ! I hear
A voice from that bright upper sphere.

That voice I must obey,
And quick from hence away.
Adieu, thou slumbering fair !
Ah ! dull must be my flight
To yonder realms of light,
While thou liest sleeping there.

THE SPEAKING FLOWER.

‘ Our ship is ready to depart,
Yet, ere I go from thee,
Some proof of love, to cheer my heart,
I pray thee grant to me.

‘ Oh give me, Mary, while the land
I leave in which we met,
At least the flower that’s in thy hand,
In token of regret.

‘ Each day, in tempest and in calm,
I’ll wear it on my breast,
And it shall shed hope’s soothing balm
O’er all my hours of rest.’

With pallid cheek and heaving breast,
And half distracted air,
The trembling maid to Heaven addressed
A faintly murmured prayer.

‘Thou answerest not, — and I must go,
Unloved, across the main;
Adieu! and may’st thou never know
What ’tis to love in vain!’

The maiden gasped, — she could not tell,
In words, the love she bore;
But from her hand the blossom fell
Before him, on the floor.

TO A LADY

WHO ASKED THE AUTHOR TO WRITE ABOUT LOVE.

NAY, Lady, ask me not to dwell
Upon the theme you gave ;
For, living only in the past,
I could but hope to save
Some relic from oblivion's shore,
Which time is stealing from my store.

In earlier and in happier days,
When life was bright and new,
I yielded all my soul to love,
And felt and wrote like you ;
But now, my friend, that dream is past, —
A dream too sweet, too pure to last.

Alas! it is a chilling thought,
That life's delightful spring,
With all its fresh and budding hopes,
So soon should plume its wing, —
Deserting hearts, one moment blest,
Then, left to wither in the breast.

But thus it is, — and memory
Is all that can remain ;
'The Indian Summer of the soul,
That kindly comes again,
Reviving, with its souvenirs,
The loves and hopes of early years.

TO MARY.

WHEN I wrote sonnets to thy brow,
Thine eye was full and bright;
Thy cheek was not, as it is now,
So thin and very white;
Thy beauty then inspired the tale,
But now, my love, thou'rt very pale.

When first to thee I bent the knee,
I'd no rheumatic pain;
My curling locks then floated free,—
No lady thought me plain;
But now, like Samson, I bewail,
My shaved head, — and thou art pale!

There was a time when thou, my dear,
 Couldst still enjoy a jig;
There was a time when I had hair, —
 But now I wear a wig;
There was a time, — but cease the tale, —
I'm bald, and thou art very pale.

SONNET.

TO H. W. LONGFELLOW.

POETS may be compared to streams :
Some, gentle brooks, with limpid wave,
In which the mirrored heart doth lave
 And nurse its pensive dreams.

Some, flowing from a deeper source,
Like foaming torrents ever roll ;
And, while strong banks their freaks control,
 Rush headlong on their course.

Thy verse, majestic as the tide
That rolls upon the ocean wide,
 And graceful as intense, —

Hath, like the ocean lulled to sleep,
A murmur soft and sad and deep,
Of soul the eloquence.

AN INVOCATION.

WHEN I am on my dying bed,
Oh loved one, wilt thou come,
As once thou cam'st, by passion led,
To seek my humble home?

Wilt bend thee o'er my couch of pain,
My faltering words to hear?
And place my head where it hath lain
In many a by-gone year?

Bright joy once more would thrill my frame,
Even at life's sad goal,
Could I, upon thy lips of flame,
Breathe out my parting soul.

Ah! could I hope thou wouldst be near,
When my last breath is sped,
And shed upon my grave a tear
When I am with the dead, —

How sweet it then would be to die,
To leave this troubled sphere,
And soar to find that peace on high
My fate denies me here.

SONNET.

THE dawning morn, with rosy hands,
Scatters abroad its fragrant flowers ;
Go, slave, and bear to yonder bowers
The festive cup with wreathed bands, —

And flagons, whose respected years
Give promise to the thirst we bear,
Of ruby nectar, old and rare,
The luscious grape's deep purple tears.

Though cooled in ice from Wenham lake,
It kindles, as our thirst we slake,
Voluptuous desire ;

And, till its fumes our eyes shall close,
We'll pledge the bright and blushing rose,
Emblem of passion's fire.

SPARE THE FLOWERS.

'Tis well, young girls, your rosy hours
To pass in frolic gay ;
But, heedful, spare the tender flowers
That blossom in your way.

Oh, crush them not ! but love them well,
And list to what they say ;
A warning tale to you they tell,
Of sad and swift decay.

For you, like these fair fragile flowers,
But blossom for a day ;
Like theirs are brief your sunny hours,
Like them you pass away.

And though you idly put them by,
In life's fresh morning hours,
A time shall be when you will sigh
For these unheeded flowers.

When sorrow comes, and friends retire,
And early dreams depart,
And hopes are fled, you'll then desire
To press them to your heart.

And they shall wake your dreams again,
To bless your closing hours,
When none of all you loved remain,
But these sweet sister flowers.

A CALABRIAN SONG.

WHEN twelve short summers I had seen,
One day, beneath the trees,
While gentle Spring breathed o'er the green
Its balsam-laden breeze,
A soft sweet voice did speak to me,
And thrill my soul with joy;
'T was not the voice of youthful glee
Nor pipe of shepherd boy.
My guardian angel, it was thine!
Thy heart already spoke to mine!

And after, when my own betrothed
Our trysting-place would leave,
When for the smile of lips beloved
My heart did inly grieve,

That same sweet voice again I heard,
In whispers soft and low ;
'T was not the chant of love's own bird,
Nor murmur of love's vow.
My guardian angel, it was thine !
Thy heart again did speak to mine !

And after, when my children's birth
Had brought maternal care,
When they, around my happy hearth,
Would press my kiss to share,
That tender voice within my breast
With joy would make me weep ;
'T was not my infant, lulled to rest,
That prattled in its sleep.
My guardian angel, it was thine !
Thy heart did still commune with mine !

And now, that I am old and gray,
And sad, and all alone,

And guideless grope my darkling way
To God's paternal throne,—
That sweet voice to my heart hath crept,
And still my bosom cheers;
'Tis not the voice of him I've wept,
Nor that of childhood's years.
That voice, my guardian, still is thine!
Thy angel heart still weeps with mine!

TO A YOUNG MOTHER.

NATURE, to sympathetic hearts,
Is prodigal of joy ;
And the pure pleasure she imparts
Partakes of no alloy.

The tranquil few, who love to stray
Her quiet paths along,
Find blossoms ever in their way,
To wake their souls to song.

A lily now, and now a rose,
Will thrill the trembling wire,
And praise to every flower that blows
Is echoed from the lyre.

I too, like all, have made a choice
In nature's fairy bowers,
And dedicate my heart and voice
To my elect of flowers.

The '*Mère de famille*' is my theme,
The '*Parquerette*' of the prairie,
The '*Mary-Bud*' of sunny beam,
The blooming, peerless Mary.

THE END.



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